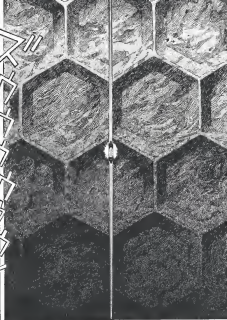


NEON GENESIS EVANGELION



STAGE 70: A GATHERING
OF NOTHINGNESS



財団
法人

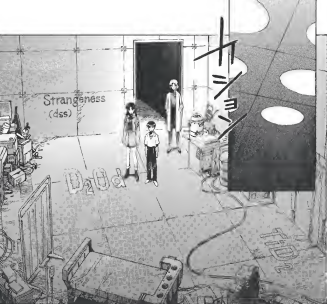
人工進化研究所

ARTIFICIAL EVOLUTION LABORATORY

3号分室

ANNEX NO.3







IT IS
HER
ROOM.

THIS IS
WHERE
REI GREW
UP.



THIS...

LOOKS
JUST LIKE
ATANAMI'S
ROOM.



DR.
AKAGI...

THE
IMAGES OF
THIS PLACE
ARE STILL
REFLECTED IN
THE LIGHT AND
WATER THAT
CONSTITUTES
REI'S DEEP
PSYCHE...

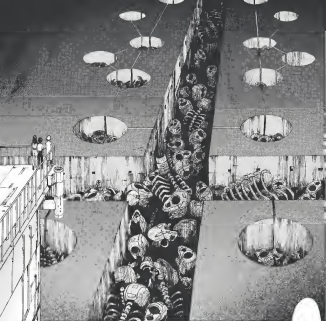


...THIS
ISN'T
WHAT I
CAME
FOR.



...MI-
SATO.

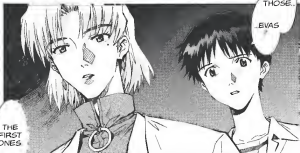
I
KNOW...



ARE
THOSE...

...EVAS

THE
FIRST
ONES





THIS
IS ALSO
WHERE
YOUR
MOTHER
DISAP-
PEARED...



RITSU-
KO?



ALL
FAIL-
URES.

THEY
WERE
DISPOSED
OF A
DECADE
AGO.

THIS
PLACE
IS NOW
NOTHING
BUT A
DUMPING
GROUND



AND,
IN HER
PLACE...

REI
AYA-
NAMI
WAS
BORN.



I'M FINE,
MISATO.

I've
got
to see
this



COME
THIS
WAY.



THAT
HEART
SHE
HAS
NOW.



I'LL
SHOW
YOU THE
TRUTH.

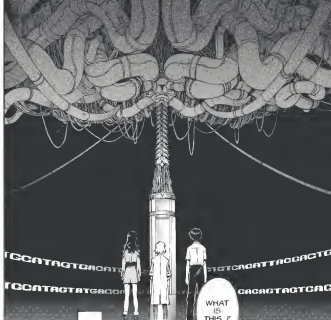
...WAS
PAIN-
STAKINGLY
SAL-
VAGED.



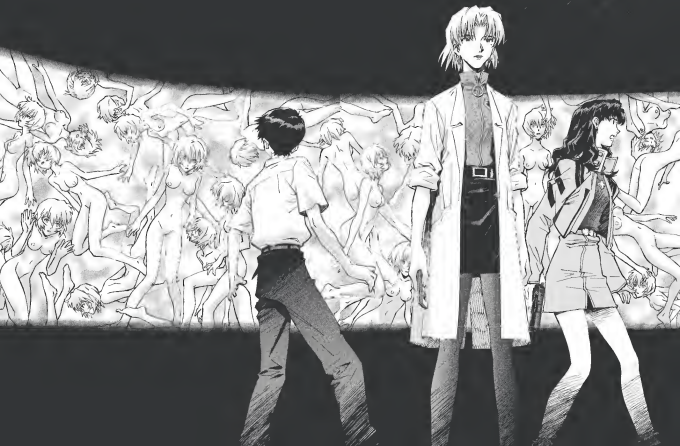
THAT
CHILD
WAS
BORN IN
THE VERY
PLACE
THAT YOUR
MOTHER
VANISHED.

...EMPTY.

...AND
WITHOUT
A SOUL.













„BUT
I'M..“



„PULL
YOUR-
SELF
TOGETH-
ER“

„I'M
TRY-
ING..“



ONCE..

„PEOPLE
DID FIND
GOD, AND
IN THEIR
JOY, THEY
TRIED TO
POSSESS
HIM.“

THAT
IS WHY
THEY
WERE
PUN-
ISHED..



BUT
THE GOD
THEY HAD
TRIED SO
HARD TO
FIND
DISAP-
PEARED.



..FIF-
TEEN
YEARS
AGO.



AND
FROM
ADAM, IN
THE IMAGE
OF GOD,
THEY MADE
HUMAN
BEINGS.



..IS
EVA.

THAT..



SO
THEY
TRIED TO
RESURRECT
HIM ON
THEIR
OWN.

THAT
IS
ADAM.









BUT
I LOST,
EVEN TO
THEM.

I
COULDN'T
WIN, YOU
KNOW.



WHO
ELSE
BE-
SIDES
ME...

...WOULD
KNOW?



I
KNEW
WHAT
THEY
WERE.
THEY
WERE
JUST
THINGS.



I
DIDN'T
CARE
ABOUT
MY
BODY.

ALL
I HAD TO
DO WAS
THINK OF
HIM, AND I
COULD BEAR
ANYTHING...
ANY
INSULT.



...I'M
SUCH A
FOOL.

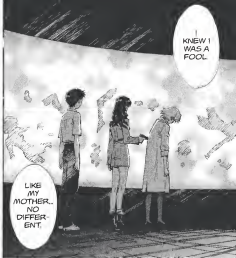


AND...

...AND
HE...

BUT...

...BUT
I DIDN'T
WANT
HIM TO
THINK
THAT.





...what do you
want of me?

And

Mom...

Rin

what

do
I do
now ?

TO BE CONTINUED
IN EVANGELION
VOLUME ELEVEN

YOSHIYUKI SADAMOTO



I've thought at great length about how nice it is to be young, especially when it comes to love. As long as you have feelings of love towards one another, you can overcome obstacles, but those obstacles become more difficult the older you get. Work, income, domestic life, health, the future—especially the future—which, even as you contemplate it, sees your pure undiluted love go stale.

Although the world that Shinji, Rei, and Asuka are experiencing is, of course, a two-dimensional, imaginary one, I believe there is a place like this somewhere out there. I am writing this and reliving my youth, even if only emotionally, while eating CoQ10 gummies.

THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER

THE ANIME, THE MANGA, AND THE MARK TWAIN NOVELLA

“GOD WILL PROVIDE FOR THIS KITTEN.”

“WHAT MAKES YOU THINK SO?”

URSULA’S EYES SNAPPED WITH ANGER.

“BECAUSE I KNOW IT!” SHE SAID. “NOT A SPARROW FALLS TO THE GROUND WITHOUT HIS SEEING IT.”

“BUT IT FALLS, JUST THE SAME.
WHAT GOOD IS SEEING IT FALL?”

—FROM *THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER*

There is a short novel by Mark Twain, written near the end of his life and published posthumously, entitled *The Mysterious Stranger*. The tale is set in a small village in 18th century Austria, where three boys one day meet a young man different from themselves. “He had new and good clothes on, and was handsome and had a winning face and a pleasant voice, and was easy and graceful and unembarrassed, not slouchy and awkward and diffident, like other boys.”

The mysterious stranger starts to do small but amazing tricks for them—causing water to turn to ice, conjuring grapes and bread out of thin air, even making birds out of clay that can fly. At last one boy, the story’s narrator, works up the courage to ask the stranger who he is:

“An angel,” he said, quite simply, and set another bird free and clapped his hands and made it fly away.

The angel then proceeds to really impress them by making an entire toy castle, complete with five hundred miniature soldiers and workmen that move around by themselves. Naturally the boys get involved with this ultimate playsort, making their own knights and cannon and cavalry, and although they got rather nervous again when the angel reveals his name is Satan, he assures them he is not that Satan, but only named after the fallen one.

“We others are still ignorant of sin, we are not able to commit it, we are without blennish, and we

shall abide in that estate always." Distracted by two of the miniature workmen, "Satan reached out his hand and crushed the life out of them with his fingers . . . and went on talking where he had left off: "We cannot do wrong, neither have we any disposition to do it, for we do not know what it is."

Horrified as the other boys are, "he made us drunk with the joy of being with him and of looking into the heaven of his eyes, and of feeling the ecstasy that thrilled along our veins from the touch of his hand."

Yes, Kaworu Nagisa made quite an impression on the fans of *Neon Genesis Evangelion*, despite the fact that, in the original broadcast version of the TV show (before it got all director's-cutted, box-setted, special-editioned, and platinum-lined) he shows up for only slightly less than thirteen minutes of total screen time, the climax of which being an entire minute where nothing happens at all.

That's what being a beautiful angel will do for you, especially when you make the most of your thirteen minutes on Earth by having a whirlwind romance with the main character that ends in a lover's quarrel with Prog Knees and finally a voluntary martyrdom at the hand of your boy hero. Relationships don't come any more tragic than that of Kaworu Nagisa and Shinji Ikari, and when fans (including this one) first saw it on TV, the affair was so brief and shocking the story logic of it didn't click in until much later.

In the anime, Kaworu is acknowledged as the Final Messenger, and, of all the Angels Shinji has to fight, this is the most ruthless battle, won at the highest possible cost to himself. It took even longer for me to realize that the showdown in episode 24 had also taken us full circle from Shinji's first fight in episodes 1 and 2, which emphasized his personal helplessness against the looming Angel Sachiel. Against Kaworu, it is the Angel who becomes the small, helpless figure, while Shinji is represented only by the gargantuan, frightful helm and arm of his Eva Unit-01. We never see Shinji's human face once throughout the whole final minute of decision.

So as Col. Treutman would have said instead of Major Katsuragi, "It's over, Shinji! IT'S OVER!" Kaworu v. Shinji (or Kaworu x Shinji, in the doujinshi) was the big final showdown between humanity and the Angels. And with the outcome leaving Shinji at his most wretched ever, wouldn't it be nice if everyone just died—your wish being Eva's command, as it turns out that fortunately humanity hardly ever needed the Angels to slaughter itself.

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"I AM PERISHING ALREADY—I AM FAILING—
I AM PASSING AWAY. IN A LITTLE WHILE YOU
WILL BE ALONE IN SHORELESS SPACE, TO WANDER
ITS LIMITLESS SOLITUDES WITHOUT FRIEND OR
COMRADE FOREVER...BUT I, YOUR POOR SERVANT,
HAVE REVEALED YOU TO YOURSELF AND SET YOU
FREE. DREAM OTHER DREAMS, AND BETTER!"

—FROM *THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER*

Satan's words near the end of Mark Twain's story also uncannily prefigure the end of the world and the instrumentality, both of which follow his death in the TV show in such quick order you picture Anne as a burnt-out fry cook dingy the counter bell. By now you see Sadamoto's handling of Kaworu, and perhaps nothing illustrates the different experiences of the manga and the anime better than his handling of this critical character.

No longer the last Angel to be fought, Kaworu actually becomes an active Eva pilot and fights an Angel—the dude even has the nerve to observe the fight is fixed, based on his knowledge of SEELE's prophecies. Sadamoto of course introduces him at an earlier point in the narrative—at the equivalent of episode 18's end—and then sends him to NERV near the equivalent of episode 22's beginning—before certain important events, to put it mildly, can occur.

When one notes this kind of thing, of course, it's important to restate that the *Evangelion* manga has always been a separate but equal "official" version of *Eva*, with no particular obligation to align itself with the anime, and indeed it was with *Book Five*, the first released after *The End of Evangelion*, that Sadamoto began to truly seem free to go in his own direction.

Nevertheless, as the "other" official version of the *Eva* story, it is reasonable for fans to view it as an "alternate history" relative to the anime, and the way Kaworu has been introduced makes us realize the manga may end very differently indeed. Despite the fact we know here that Kaworu is an Angel from the very beginning, he appears destined to at least hang around long enough to pick up a few paychecks. It's not clear when your health benefits kick in at NERV, although if Ritsuko is your primary caregiver it might be best to forego them.

////////////////////////////////////

“AN ANGEL’S LOVE IS SUBLIME, ADORABLE,
DIVINE, BEYOND THE IMAGINATION OF MAN—
INFINITELY BEYOND IT! BUT IT IS LIMITED
TO HIS OWN AUGUST ORDER. IF IT FELL UPON
ONE OF YOUR RACE FOR ONLY AN INSTANT, IT
WOULD CONSUME ITS OBJECT TO ASHES. NO,
WE CANNOT LOVE MEN BUT WE CAN BE
HARMLESSLY INDIFFERENT TO THEM; WE CAN
ALSO LIKE THEM, SOMETIMES.”

—FROM *THE MYSTERIOUS STRANGER*

In volume 9 we see the most staggering difference thus far between the manga and the anime: Sadamoto's Shinji doesn't even like Kaworu, much less love him. Of course, you could say the less-athensal Kaworu of the manga is harder to love. I can't believe Sadamoto had him tell Rei he thought she'd be "better." And yet he did.

I don't think any A.T. fields actually got penetrated in the anime. While I do think Shinji felt sexually attracted to Kaworu, and that you the audience are supposed to feel that he felt it, what Kaworu himself thought was a very different matter. Like Rei, I believe Kaworu to be innocent—say, he appears not to be so, because while Rei needed to be reached out to, Kaworu has come to reach out, whereas Rei has spent her existence being observed, Kaworu has come to observe.

Indeed, in the manga, Shinji's misinterpretation about Kaworu's invasion of his personal space seems almost a parody of his attitude in the anime. In the TV show, when Kaworu put his hand on Shinji's, he flinched but did not pull away; whereas in the manga it's easy to imagine Shinji slugging him. Instead he goes to run after Rei, hoping to get closer to her again.

I hardly think the charge reflects any phobia on Sadamoto's part (after all, we even get to see Shinji's "Unit One" in the manga), but the fact is the manga Shinji is less emotionally bleak and empty, and hence less vulnerable. Shinji's just as negative in the manga, of course, but it's an active variety, rather than the passive-negative creep (in the best *Nine* song sense) we know from the anime. We don't have to imagine him slugging Gendo; from the look of surprise on Dad's face in Book Seven he would have smacked the beard off his face if Kaji hadn't stopped him.

Neither is Shinji in a positive emotional situation where we leave him here, either; indeed at this point in the manga there's arguably no one he can turn to—the more brutal fate that befell Toji has cut him off from his school friends, Rei has become hesitant, Kaji is dead, and his perennial self-esteem booster Asuka is going to need to rebuild her internal supply before she can even get back to calling him a loser and idiot.

So, like Misato trying to put her own hand on Shinji's, all I can do for now while we wait for Sadamoto Sensei is to recommend for your winter vacation reading list *The Mysterious Stranger*, which I can almost guarantee will give you new angles to think about Kaworu, and may even earn you class credit besides. A quick look at the novel's comments on Amazon list a teacher who says fundamentalist students walked out of his class when he taught it, another compares it to *The Matrix*; those who dislike it call it "sick," "bitter," and "twisted." Sounds like good old *Evangelion* to me!

—Carl Gustav Horn



Although *The Mysterious Stranger* can also be found in a number of print editions, including *The Portable Mark Twain* from Penguin Books (how how) the story is legally available online at <http://text.lib.virginia.edu/toc/modeng/public/TwMyst.html>

The same site has a book called *The Holy Bible, King James Version*, which fans of *Evangelion* might also enjoy, although it's technically "Editor's Choice."



